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United States
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Division

AREI UPDATES

Updates on Agricultural Resources and Environmental Indicators Number 13 October 1996

Foreign Ownership of U.S. Agricultural Land

- Foreign individuals and entities owned 6.6 million acres of U.S. agricultural land at the end of 1995, and U.S. corporations that were 10 percent or more foreign controlled owned another 8.5 million acres.
- The 15.1-million-acre total is up slightly from 1994, about 6 percent, and represents slightly more than 1 percent of privately owned farm and forest land.
- Forest land accounted for nearly 50 percent of the foreign owned or partially owned acreage, cropland 16 percent, and pasture and other land 34 percent.

This issue of AREI UPDATES summarizes data from *Foreign Ownership of U.S. Agricultural Land Through December 31, 1995*, Statistical Bulletin No. 931, U.S. Dept. Agr., Econ. Res. Serv., October 1996, prepared from reportings under the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act of 1978 (AFIDA).

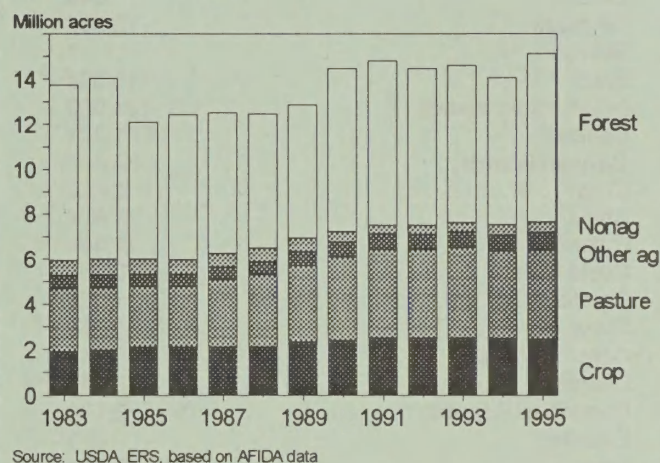
AFIDA required all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture as of February 1, 1979. Subsequent acquisitions and dispositions of such lands are reported to the Secretary as they occur. This provides the Department with a continuing inventory of such ownership that is netted out at the end of each calendar year and reported to the President and the Congress.

Foreign persons from Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands Antilles, and the British Virgin Islands account for 63 percent of the foreign-held acreage, and those from Japan 3 percent (table 1).

Corporations own 72 percent of the acreage; partnerships, 20 percent; individuals, 6 percent; and others, 2 percent.

The largest number of acres owned by foreign persons was reported in Maine (table 2), accounting for 16 percent of Maine's privately owned agricultural land, and 20 percent of all the reported foreign-owned land nationwide.

Trends in Foreign Ownership of Agricultural Land by Type of Use, 1983-95



Ninety-four percent of the foreign-owned acreage will remain in agricultural production, according to the foreign owners. No change in tenure was reported for 48 percent of the acres, while some change was planned for 29 percent of the acres.

Foreign ownership of U.S. agricultural land has ranged from 12-15 million acres, slightly above or below 1 percent of all privately owned agricultural land in the United States (see figure). The greatest variations have been in forest land, mainly due to million-acre-plus changes attributable to large timber companies. Crop, pasture, and other agriculture categories have had steady but small increases in foreign ownership. Foreign-owned cropland rose from 1.7 million acres in 1981 to 2.5 million in 1995; pasture, from 2.8 to 3.9 million acres; and other agriculture, from 0.5 to 0.8 million acres.

To obtain State level data on foreign ownership of agricultural land, see the box "State Level Data" on page 3.

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About AREI UPDATES

AREI UPDATES is a periodic series that supplements and updates information in **Agricultural Resources and Environmental Indicators (AREI)**, USDA, ERS, AH-705, Dec. 1994. UPDATES report recent data from surveys of farm operators and others knowledgeable about changing agricultural resource use and conditions, with only minimal interpretation or analysis. Please contact the individual listed at the end of the text for additional information about the data in this UPDATE. If you would like to be added to the mailing list or have other questions about AREI UPDATES or AREI, contact Richard Magleby, (202) 219-0436. [rmagleby@econ.ag.gov]

Table 1—U.S. agricultural landholdings by country of foreign owner, December 31, 1995

Country	Acres Number	Country	Acres Number
Interests excluding U.S. corporations with foreign shareholders			
Argentina	12,578	Laos	31
Australia	6,106	Lebanon	12,663
Austria	29,336	Liberia	30,981
Bahamas	36,325	Liechtenstein	133,276
Bahrain	313	Luxembourg	3,109
Belgium	65,586	Malaysia	7,948
Belize	549	Mexico	179,276
Bermuda	73,835	Morocco	1,035
Bolivia	11	Namibia	197
Brazil	10,336	Netherlands	112,104
British Virgin Islands	124,062	Netherlands Antilles	355,382
Canada	1,571,341	New Zealand	14,011
Cayman Islands	39,028	Nicaragua	1,378
Chile	2,055	Norway	4,913
China	924	Oman	454
Colombia	11,414	Pakistan	982
Costa Rica	13,835	Panama	121,629
Croatia	1,023	Peru	308
Cuba	58	Philippines	3,816
Czech Republic	347	Poland	147
Denmark	12,948	Portugal	4,146
Dominican Republic	2,108	Russia	771
Ecuador	971	St. Vincent	2,637
Egypt	2,076	Saudi Arabia	31,956
El Salvador	128	Senegal	10
France	128,663	Singapore	504
Gambia	294	Somalia	11
Germany	753,530	South Africa	2,673
Greece	60,491	Spain	4,883
Guatemala	1,102	Sweden	54,880
Guyana	35	Switzerland	286,005
Honduras	1,018	Syria	2,689
Hong Kong	15,061	Taiwan	7,899
Hungary	103	Tanzania	10,143
India	1,754	Thailand	1,835
Indonesia	1,392	Trinidad & Tobago	94
Iran	2,343	Turkey	38
Ireland	10,490	Turks Island	3,292
Israel	951	United Arab Emirates	4,149
Italy	81,477	United Kingdom	1,798,722
Ivory Coast	119	Uruguay	10,807
Jamaica	567	Venezuela	22,339
Japan	199,980	Vietnam	152
Jordan	1,580	Zimbabwe	230
Kampuchea	31	Multiple ¹	54,843
Korea (South)	1,570	Third tier ²	54,872
Kuwait	20,188	Subtotal ³	6,644,252
See footnotes at end of table.			Continued—

Source: USDA, ERS, Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) data.

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Table 1—U.S. agricultural landholdings by country of foreign owner, December 31, 1995--Continued

Country	Acres Number	Country	Acres Number
U.S. corporations with foreign shareholders			
US/Andorra	3,741	US/Lebanon	411
US/Argentina	4,056	US/Liberia	24,064
US/Australia	5,030	US/Libyan Arab Republic	280
US/Austria	26,138	US/Liechtenstein	101,202
US/Bahamas	61,500	US/Luxembourg	234,551
US/Barbados	41	US/Malaysia	300
US/Belgium	88,553	US/Malta	500
US/Bermuda	37,571	US/Mexico	254,395
US/Brazil	14,396	US/Netherlands	384,297
US/Brit. Virgin Islands	424,704	US/Netherlands Antilles	210,572
US/Canada	1,799,034	US/New Hebrides	883
US/Cayman Islands	52,536	US/New Zealand	50,455
US/Chile	9,948	US/Nicaragua	282
US/China	13,151	US/Norway	9,709
US/Colombia	11,435	US/Pakistan	423
US/Costa Rica	407	US/Panama	151,088
US/Denmark	8,228	US/Paraguay	236
US/Dominican Republic	589	US/Peru	1,696
US/Ecuador	1,632	US/Philippines	7,881
US/Egypt	4,264	US/Portugal	1,683
US/El Salvador	607	US/Qatar	219
US/Finland	2,419	US/Saudi Arabia	10,711
US/France	1,100,081	US/Singapore	73
US/Germany	872,745	US/South Africa	2,733
US/Greece	5,249	US/Spain	7,846
US/Guatemala	412	US/Sweden	4,094
US/Guyana	334	US/Switzerland	331,355
US/Honduras	37	US/Taiwan	45,029
US/Hong Kong	131,139	US/Thailand	252
US/Indonesia	644	US/Trinidad & Tobago	20
US/Iran	1,861	US/Turkey	443
US/Iraq	800	US/United Arab Emirates	4,543
US/Ireland	1,942	US/United Kingdom	1,044,245
US/Israel	414	US/Uruguay	695
US/Italy	23,547	US/Venezuela	40,182
US/Japan	290,936	US/Multiple	178,776
US/Jordan	434	US/Third Tier	342,754
US/Kenya	32		
US/Korea (South)	85		
US/Kuwait	8,330	Subtotal ⁴	8,457,880
		Total all landholdings	15,102,037

¹A report is processed as "multiple" when no single country predominates—for example, an equal partnership between a Canadian and a German.

²A report is processed as "third tier" if three or more levels of ownership are reported with no foreign interests stated.

³Total interests excluding U.S. corporations with foreign shareholders.

⁴Total interest of U.S. corporations with foreign shareholders.

Source: USDA, ERS, Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) data.

State Level Data

Data on foreign ownership of agricultural land by type of land in each State may be obtained through ERS AutoFAX:

1. You must call from a telephone attached to a fax machine. Place call to 202-219-1107, using the handset attached to your fax.
2. When you get a voice prompt, wait for menu options, then **press 4**. When prompted for the document number, **enter 25000**. This will get you a directory of available State data and the specific document numbers, which you can enter in the same way.
3. When asked for a yes or no response, **press 1 for yes** and **2 for no** on the telephone keypad.

Table 2—U.S. agricultural landholdings of foreign owners, by State, December 31, 1995

State or territory	Acres	State or territory	Acres	State or territory	Acres
Alabama	299,579	Louisiana	682,366	Oklahoma	56,306
Alaska	75	Maine	2,968,434	Oregon	644,143
Arizona	338,653	Maryland	51,260	Pennsylvania	91,769
Arkansas	155,691	Massachusetts	2,029	Puerto Rico	839
California	954,052	Michigan	444,239	Rhode Island	17
Colorado	678,173	Minnesota	221,971	S. Carolina	198,852
Connecticut	881	Mississippi	444,286	S. Dakota	42,957
Delaware	5,878	Missouri	73,354	Tennessee	83,010
Florida	620,559	Montana	474,496	Texas	1,209,677
Georgia	558,953	Nebraska	74,769	Utah	61,013
Hawaii	180,058	Nevada	388,393	Vermont	86,532
Idaho	22,624	New Hampshire	16,477	Virginia	144,284
Illinois	209,549	New Jersey	18,369	Washington	389,777
Indiana	94,395	New Mexico	785,355	W. Virginia	166,974
Iowa	33,105	New York	280,614	Wisconsin	77,890
Kansas	69,490	N. Carolina	153,962	Wyoming	210,983
Kentucky	121,151	N. Dakota	27,839		
		Ohio	185,935	Total	15,102,037

Source: USDA, ERS, Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) data.

Table 3—U.S. agricultural landholdings of foreign owners, 1981-95

Year	Forest land	Pasture land	Cropland	Other agr.	Non-agr. ¹	Total
	Acres					
1981	7,164,412	2,787,041	1,664,391	518,189	574,133	12,708,166
1982	7,449,090	3,000,193	1,802,711	544,545	662,807	13,459,346
1983	7,812,550	2,770,094	1,913,926	566,165	675,145	13,737,880
1984	8,059,036	2,751,489	1,965,104	566,954	692,889	14,035,472
1985	6,130,936	2,688,526	2,096,602	541,829	635,305	12,093,198
1986	6,468,592	2,660,832	2,112,401	535,877	640,196	12,417,898
1987	6,293,552	2,960,564	2,115,267	550,426	614,064	12,533,873
1988	6,020,344	3,185,892	2,116,117	570,140	592,245	12,484,738
1989	5,961,703	3,353,753	2,328,243	625,693	606,112	12,875,504
1990	7,276,731	3,673,387	2,386,571	660,770	448,282	14,445,741
1991	7,300,000	3,900,000	2,500,000	700,000	400,000	14,800,000
1992	7,000,000	3,900,000	2,500,000	678,000	400,000	14,478,000
1993	7,000,000	4,000,000	2,500,000	700,000	400,000	14,600,000
1994	6,552,867	3,863,634	2,470,992	718,958	451,793	14,058,244
1995	7,471,475	3,944,409	2,433,959	791,781	460,413	15,102,037

¹Non-agricultural land that is part of agricultural holdings.

Source: USDA, ERS, Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) data.

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